



ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

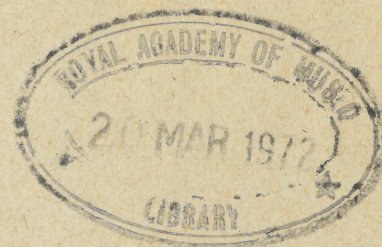
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BULLETIN

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150th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



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REVIEW WEEK 20th - 25th March, 1972

(DH =Duke's Hall; LH =Lecture Hall; T =Theatre)

MONDAY

10 - 1, LH

Master Class (Pierre Bernac)

The distinguished French singer will be giving guidance and advice to singing students, offering a mainly French repertoire. Pierre Bernac won world-wide fame as a singer particularly as a result of his association with the composer Francis Poulenc, who, in addition to being one of the most eminent song composers of this century, was also an excellent pianist.

2.30, LH

Live Electronics Concert

7.30

First Orchestra Concert

The programme will include the Prelude and Liebestod from Wagner's 'Tristan und Isolde', Bartók's third piano concerto (soloist Richard Markham), and Strauss's 'Ein Heldenleben'.

TUESDAY

10 - 1, LH

Master Class (Pierre Bernac)

1.30 - 2.30, DH

Concert by Massed Cellos (Organised by Douglas Cameron)

The programme will include original compositions by Davidoff, Villa-Lobos, Klenzel and Casals. Forty cellists will be taking part, and the sound should be quite fantastic. This is a unique event organised specially for the 150th Anniversary year, and should not be missed on any account.

3.00

Football in Regent's Park

Ifor James has assembled a team of musicians who have not yet quite reached F.A. League Division 1 standard but who should do so imminently. They will meet a team of R.A.M. students. Kick-off by Mrs. Lesley Lewis.

WEDNESDAY

10, LH

'The Arts Councils and You' (John Cruft)

John Cruft, who is Music Director of the Arts Council of Great Britain, will be talking about the activities of the Arts Council, and how they affect the individual performer, and particularly the young performer. Most students, at some stage of their career, will have contacts directly, or indirectly, with the Arts Council, which is one of the most powerful patrons of musical performance in this country. Not only does it give financial aid for concert-giving, it also controls a number of valuable awards for young performers.

11.30, LH

Analysis of Stockhausen's 'Refrain' (Roger Smalley)

2.30, DH

Exchange Concert by students from the Colgone Hochschule

5.00 DH

New Music Concert

THURSDAY

11.30, LH

Poetry Reading (Peter Hearn)

Following a very successful appearance at a previous Review Week, Peter Hearn has been invited to give another programme. When asked for biographical notes, he replied 'Born, baptised, bachelor, and not yet buried, would, I think, cover it.' He has, in fact, taught at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, and is now Consultant to the Examining Board of that institution, and helped to compile their Anthology of Verse and Prose. He writes, 'I think I would much prefer to let the programme come as a surprise rather than give details of the items - may I just call it "Personal Choice".'

2 - 3.30, T.

Drama Workshop Section (Students from Guildhall School of Music and Drama, directed by Peter Bucknell and Dorothea Alexander)

Students from the Guildhall School will rehearse Lessing's 'Emilia Galotti', under the direction of Dorothea Alexander. Peter Bucknell, who is the director of drama at the Guildhall School, will give an introduction to the session, after which Dorothea Alexander will direct the session and comment on it. At the end a number of scenes will be played through.

THURSDAY (continued)

6, LH

'Fabulous Animals'. (David Attenborough)

David Attenborough, the distinguished author, traveller and B.B.C. executive, will introduce a recent film of his depicting some of the more fascinating animals that he has encountered.

FRIDAY

11.0, T

FILM: 'RASHOMON' (Director Akira Kurosawa)

A beautiful woman is travelling through a forest with her husband. They are attacked by a bandit, who overcomes the man in combat and binds him; then violates the woman before his eyes. The husband is subsequently found dead; the film presents four conflicting accounts of the event - as related by the girl, the imprisoned bandits, the spirit of the husband, and a woodcutter who witnessed the occurrence.

'One of the most original and fascinating films I have ever seen.' (Daily Telegraph)

'A film of strangely impressive power.' (Sunday Express)

Japanese dialogue. English sub-titles.

2.30, DH

Second Orchestra

This year in addition to being the 150th Anniversary of the Academy is also the Centenary of Vaughan Williams's birth. The Academy is marking this occasion in a number of ways, including this concert's inclusion of Vaughan Williams's fifth Symphony, and later his Serenade for sixteen soloists and orchestra at Westminster Abbey on 17th July. Mrs. Ursula Vaughan Williams will be attending this performance of the fifth Symphony by the Second Orchestra. Other works in the programme will be Franck's Symphony in D minor (first movement), Mussorgsky's 'A Night on the Bare Mountain', Debussy's Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune, and the finale of Elgar's second Symphony.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS IN 1922

May Blyth

I remember the Centenary of 1922 very well - I was unable to take as much part as I would have wished, for I had become a member of the newly formed British National Opera Company and so was away on tour, and in a season at Covent Garden - but I joined in what I could. I remember going to concerts and hearing past students - I also remember being in a choir, but I don't remember the outcome of that - but the highlight for me was being invited to a repeat performance of 'Nadeshda'; an opera by Goring Thomas, which we had performed in 1921, which was repeated in the Duke's Hall. It was a fine part for a young singer. It was memorable for me because it was the end of my studentship which I had commenced in 1916.

Alan Bush

In the R.A.M. Centenary Souvenir programme twenty-seven events are listed. I remember four of these. Two were the orchestral concerts in which past students such as Dame Myra Hess and Sir Henry Wood took part; past students whose compositions were performed in them included Arnold Bax, William Sterndale Bennett and our Principal, Sir Alexander Mackenzie. There were no less than eight items in each concert, sixteen composers being represented in all.

The other two events I remember were those in which students were involved, including myself. The Celebration opened on 17th July 1922, at the Queen's Hall with a Masque called 'A wreath of a Hundred Roses'. In the official programme it was rather curiously announced as follows:

The words by a very old student (Louis N. Parker)
The music by very young ones.

The composers included three past students, Frederick Corder and Paul Corder (then aged 70 and 43 respectively), J.B. McEwen (aged 54); and also two present students, Arthur Sandford and myself (22 and 21, respectively). My contribution was a festive march for organ, played by Benjamin Dale.

The performance of the Masque was preceded by Frederick Corder's fifty-part Motet for female voices and organ, 'Sing unto God'. Ten five-part choirs had to be separately rehearsed for this and I was assigned to one of them as its conductor. There was no conductors' course at the R.A.M. at that time. I had never conducted before in my life and knew nothing of teaching choir singers their notes. Singers then were not expected to be able to sing at sight; of course we did sight-singing at aural training classes, but this did not get us very far. At the first rehearsal after I had been conducting for about twelve bars, no one at all was continuing to sing. I was appalled. What was I to do? I started from the beginning again. This time one stalwart contralto managed to reach bar 14. It dawned on me to ask the pianist to bang out each part separately on the piano. By means of this classic method we got on famously, and my choir was able to keep its end up at the first combined rehearsal.

By a lucky chance I had been favourably noticed during the Lent Term of that year by

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, of whom we were all terrified but who was one of those rare human beings adored by everybody and deservedly so. He had decided to perform some movements of the Symphony in C by Saint-Saëns, which included parts for two pianos; Harry Isaacs and I were asked to play these. The parts consisted largely of rapid scales, in which the C major scale figured prominently; this particular scale, as everyone knows, is one of the most difficult to play evenly at speed. However, we had had the chance to practise our parts a week or so before the first rehearsal, when we rattled off our contribution in fine style, which could not be said to have happened with the rest of the orchestra. Sir Alexander was delighted. As a result I was chosen as the soloist in the Students' Orchestral Concert in the Concerto for piano and string orchestra by Michael Head. Why I was the lucky one and not Harry Isaacs I have never known; understandably enough I did not argue about it. Thus as things turned out I was the only student to appear in those celebrations as both composer and performer.

Douglas Cameron

The most vivid recollection I have of the R.A.M. Centenary Year, 1922 - was a strange, yet exciting one. In the June Derby of that year, I indulged in some small schoolboy bets. As a study in alliteration, I backed horses whose name began with P, the result was:

Papyrus
Parth
Pharos

I backed the three each way. That made by memories of Centenary Year.

Michael Head

The chief recollection that I have of the R.A.M. Centenary Celebrations lies round the personality of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who was so keen that the general programme of events should be representative. Of these, I can recall first an orchestral concert at the Queen's Hall. I had composed an orchestral tone-poem with the rather grandiloquent title of 'The Fall of Babulkund', but Sir Alexander did not think much of it - 'too atmospheric' - he said. I was consoled, however, by his liking for my piano concerto with string orchestra, which he asked Alan Bush to play at this concert. (He did not like composers playing their own works, he said.) As he rehearsed the work, I remember him saying: 'I like that bit - it sounds like a fugue-subject, only it isn't.' As I greatly admired Sir Alexander, this friendly remark has remained in my memory.

Roy Henderson

What was it like to be a singing student at the R.A.M. in 1922? For those of us who came straight out of the army it was a liberating experience, and rather exciting to be in mixed company. Training was basically the same, though some subjects such as languages have been added to the curriculum. In one way life was better. With only 400 students the building was not over-crowded, and on most days practice rooms were available for an hour or two. In the restaurant small groups of people gossiped and wasted a lot of time as no doubt they do today. Money was not too plentiful, although a decent room with one's

own piano, breakfast and dinner and full board on week-ends cost only two guineas, exactly the fee that Olive Groves and I each received, plus expenses, for our first engagement in the Isle of Wight.

Although bus fares were cheap, less than 1p from Victoria to Baker Street, many of us walked or bicycled to the Academy to save money. In those days bus tops were uncovered and open to any weather. Three or four of us used to pass the time on the steps at the front of the building pointing to the sky behind a passing bus. On a good day between 40 and 50 people would get up (they had to in order to look in the direction we were pointing) and peer into the sky for something that was never there. Dress was very much more formal than the creations we see today. The only time we even had a glimpse of a female knee, except in opera, was when an unsuspecting student stood on a Metropolitan line grating outside the Academy and the rush of air from a passing train caused a certain amount of embarrassment.

We had begun our rivalry in cricket, football and girls' hockey with the R.C.M. At our first football game we asked Sir Alexander Mackenzie to kick off. We lost. We then persuaded Sir Hugh Allen to perform a similar service in our next game. We won, and ever after that we held our ascendancy in football. At cricket the College usually beat us, with a young student named Keith Falkner, very much a thorn in our flesh. Harry Farjeon presented a cup for the outright winners of cricket, football and hockey. I well remember the year when the destiny of the cup depended on the cricket match which we played, at Lords. We forced the College to a draw and held the cup for six months each. What happened to the cup afterwards I do not know. Sir Keith suggested we had lost it, I suggested they had pawned it, and there it stands.

Operas were not unusually exciting until my last year, when we performed Verdi's 'Falstaff' at the Scala Theatre under Julius Harrison. Previously we had performed Goring Thomas's 'Nadeshda' during the Centenary year, with May Blyth in the name part. In the same opera on one occasion Olive Groves came to the rescue and sight-read the tenor's part for an act when he was delayed on the boat from Jersey: quite a feat! The Duke's Hall was converted into a theatre in those days. We performed a good deal of Gilbert and Sullivan, as our producer, Cairns James, was an old Savoyard. I still think G. & S. is splendid training: it presents no vocal problems for young voices, it lays great stress on words, and the acting requires great discipline and first-rate timing.

The highlight of the Centenary Celebrations was the Academy Masque at the Queen's Hall when Julia Neilson and Phyllis Neilson-Terry played the roles of 1822 and 1922 respectively. In this I was lucky to be chosen as the soloist, my first in Queen's Hall which was to become my favourite concert hall. I have often wondered why nobody had the sense to build an exact replica with better back-stage accommodation, instead of the modern mistakes, which, with every kind of tinkering, will never approach the perfect acoustics of the Queen's Hall.

During the Centenary Year we also performed 'The Yeoman of the Guard'. At the first stage rehearsal a girl student I knew was heard to say: 'Don't you tickle me, Roy Henderson.' It was, perhaps, devilment, but I fancy it was just to get to know her friend who was with her. We have been married for forty-six years.

Harry Isaacs

My memories of the Centenary Celebrations have become somewhat hazy after all these years, but a few impressions - all rather trivial, I fear - still remain. I remember being present at

the Service in St. Paul's Cathedral. In the Choir - (it was the Cathedral Choir, and not singers from the R.A.M.) - were two young singers who were to make considerable careers as concert artists, and whom I saw as the Choir processed up the Nave from the main doors - namely Keith Falkner, and the late Stuart Robertson, who was brother of the celebrated actress Anna Neagle. I remember two occasions at the Queen's Hall - one was a Masque by, I think, Louis N. Parker, in which the splendid actress Julia Neilson represented R.A.M. 1822, and her beautiful daughter Phyllis Neilson-Terry R.A.M. 1922. I think I'm right in saying that both these ladies had been students at the R.A.M. For some reason I must have been present at the rehearsal of the Masque, for I've always recollected an incident which convulsed us - Julia Neilson hadn't learned her lines and kept stopping - when some students were chattering she said, with inimitable timing, 'Hush, or I shall forget my words'.

All I remember of the other occasion at the Queen's Hall was one item of an orchestral concert, at which King George V and Queen Mary were present - namely the piano Concerto by Tobias Matthay, conducted by the composer with Myra Hess as soloist. There were many Chamber Concerts - could I be right in thinking that the whole of the Celebrations were compressed into two or three weeks? I've forgotten all details of these concerts, but I do recall vividly that a very festive air held sway over the R.A.M. and all its personnel during the whole of the events. My own minute contribution to the proceedings was at a Students Chamber Concert at the Aeolian Hall on Saturday 15th July 1922 at 8 p.m., when Olive Groves sang a cycle of songs written by me, and which I accompanied. It is inevitable that most of those who were students in 1922 are now parted 'afar and asunder' but I am sure it will profoundly surprise many present students to hear that some of us are still around in the R.A.M. - as though history had come alive. My memories are somewhat confused by the years but the sense of excitement and the tremendous importance of the occasion were overwhelming to a second-year student as I then was.

There were many concerts by ex-students as well as students, Chamber Concerts taking place in the Aeolian Hall (then a similar hall to the Wigmore but now used by the B.B.C.) and orchestral concerts in Queen's Hall. Naturally my most vivid memory is of stark terror before performing at a Chamber Concert (Bax - so avant-garde in 1922!) but other peoples' performances were clothed in radiance.

First of all, I remember an orchestral concert to which King George V and Queen Mary came. It was conducted by Sir Henry Wood and the soloists (all ex-students) included Mr. Ben Davies (with his usual white kid gloves), Miss Myra Hess and Mr. Lionel Tertis. Although the music performed throughout the celebrations left very little impression the performances left a deep one. Bax's 'Tintagel' and B.J. Dale's Romance for viola seemed to be memorable works, but many of my contemporaries played and sang items which I cannot now remember though I well recollect my admiration of the performances. It is interesting to notice the names of those who are still at, or who have lately been at, the R.A.M. such as Alan Bush (pianist as well as composer), Dorothy Howell, Vivian Langrish, Olive Groves, May Blyth, Douglas Cameron, Roy Henderson, Egerton Tidmarsh and Winifred Small.

Many players in the various student orchestras were my friends too, and among them were Norah Stevenson (mother of Christopher Regan) and Ivy (Priaulx) Rainier, while the glittering ex-student orchestra included Paul Beard and Giovanni Barbirolli.

I have only the vaguest memory of the service at St. Paul's but various parts of it, chants etc., were composed by Stanley Marchant (father of Hugh), Leslie Regan (father of Christopher), and Dr. Greenish (father of Doris), all the music being by R.A.M. composers.

Everyone who was present at the Pageant must remember it. Julia Neilson and her daughter Phyllis Neilson-Terry took the parts of 1822 and 1922 respectively. It was an admirable project and I'm sure we all really thought so but I must confess that we laughed - rather long and loud. I think the heyday of Pageants was over the incongruities and absurdities loomed rather too large at our age. Nevertheless, the Centenary was a great occasion and everyone who took even the humblest part was very proud to have done so.

A GLIMPSE INTO THE ACADEMY'S PAST

By

Richard Andrewes

As we approach the 150th Anniversary celebration let us take a quick look back to 1922 when the Academy remembered its centenary. The bill of fare, as one might expect, was largely drawn from the Academic larder, the details of which may be found in an extraordinary large scrap-book, handsomely, if tastelessly, bound, and now in the library. This tome also contains newspaper cuttings of the music critics' reports of the various concerts which they did and did not attend. Most attention seems to have been paid to the main orchestral concert which was held at Queen's Hall on Tuesday 13th July 1922:

'Until Tuesday I have never suspected the Royal Academy of Music of possessing a sense of humour: but on that evening I, in common with many scores of other people, had to admit that I had done it an injustice. It was a really brilliant idea on the Academy's part to issue, for its orchestral concert at Queen's Hall, many more tickets than there are seats in the hall: nothing funnier has been seen for a long time than the crowds of disappointed people - among them several musical critics - being turned away from the doors. I cannot imagine any more humorous way of wasting a busy man's evening...' E.N.

And another fuller report in 'The Morning Post':

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

Tuesday Night's Defective Arrangements

'There was a complete breakdown in the arrangements made for the concert at the Queen's Hall held on Tuesday night in connection with the centenary of the Royal Academy of Music. Hundreds of ticket-holders in evening dress learned to their amazement when they arrived that the building was already full.

'There were well-known musicians, former pupils of the Academy, who had won renown, Professors of the institution, Associates, Fellows, who had undoubted right to be present at the centenary celebrations of their old school, even if the general public was crowded out.

'When Mr. Edward German, the most national of all English composers, arrived at the artists' entrance he was welcomed by many of his former fellow-students. It was five-and-twenty minutes to ten, but he was told that he was "too late". His work, written specially for the concert, was placed last on the programme: the occasion was unprecedented; the concert came to an end at half past nine instead of ten o'clock.

It would be interesting to know who is responsible for the miscalculation in the time table and for the issue of between 500 and 700 more tickets than the Queen's Hall could possibly hold.'

This year's main concert is at the Royal Festival Hall on 5th July. The date of special significance, since it was on that day in 1822 that the Promoters of the Institution held their first meeting at the Thatched House Tavern. On the first anniversary of that historic occasion, the Royal Academy was already a going concern and prepared to give a public 'Exhibition' of the talents of its inmates. That first concert must have been a curious affair even by the

standards of the time. The programme opened with a Haydn symphony, in an arrangement for two pianofortes, oboe, violins, viola, violoncello, and double bass. There followed a medley of vocal and instrumental numbers, and the concert closed with the National Anthem for which Bochsa had written an introduction for two pianofortes, three harps, oboe, violins, viola, violoncello and double bass. Believe it or not, this was the largest band the Academy could muster at the time! On the other hand this is understandable when one realises that there were only about thirty boys and girls, and that the Academy was founded as a school, rather on the lines of the Menhuin School, or the Central Tutorial School. However, the critics did attend this concert and did review it in their inimitable style:

'The emulation, inseparable from ingenious and generous minds working together, and taught by each other to put their whole strength, and employ their best speed, seems to have powerfully operated on this scientific and highly polished assemblage of students and practioners: and to expect from their present success a rich harvest of musical beauty and accomplishments is but to anticipate the flowers promised by the already opening buds of a well-cultivated garden. The room was filled to overflow with company of the most genteel description.'

That the students were precocious teenage musicians gave the authorities no fewer problems of discipline than their equivalents today, as the following letter from the Warden to the Committee of Management shows:

January 2 1827

'My Lords and Gentlemen,

'Having made a complaint last Wednesday on the behaviour of one of the students (Seguin), and being requested to make the particulars known in a letter addressed to the Committee, I beg to submit the following statement.

'On Monday, previous to the vacation, Seguin, by swinging a log of wood tied to a string, broke open the door which separates the boys' playground from the girls'. On the next day, Tuesday, at dinnertime, when dinner was on the table, he came into the room and walked upon the table cloth with his dirty boots to a seat on the opposite side. One of the servants soon after coming into the room, he took up a piece of bread, broke it into three or four pieces, and threw it at her; on my requesting him to desist, he returned answer that I had better mind my own business, and he should do it if he liked; upon going out of the room he took another piece of bread from the basket, broke it into several pieces, and threw it about the table. Monday evening he, with three others, climbed upon the partition which separates the two grounds, and was conversing with the female students. This is against the rules which he was aware of. On the same evening he broke a large square of glass by throwing stones. A short time previous to the above mentioned he came into the office, followed by several boys whose names I had just put down as well as his own for not being at their practice, and threatened to knock me down if I ever attempted, as he called it, to spy upon his actions, with other abusive language; also many such misdemeanours too numerous to mention. I have at times reported him to Mr. Hamilton (the Headmaster), but as his conduct seems to be growing worse instead of mending, I thought proper to make it known to the Committee in hopes of having redress, it being impossible for me to remain in my situation unless some steps are taken to effect this purpose, as I am continually being insulted in the discharge of my duty.

(Signed) W. Inglis, Clerk.'

The Committee promptly sent a letter to Seguin's father stating that in view of the complaints

of gross misconduct he 'cannot be received into the house after the vacation'. The next few steps in the story are not known, but Seguin remained at the Academy until 1830, and Inglis was dismissed the following May for having been seen boating with some of the young ladies of the Academy. Seguin later married one of the girls from the other side of the partition (Miss Childe) - maybe it was her attraction which provoked him to such misbehaviour.

None of the earliest students made a shattering impact on the musical world. Among the girls the only one remembered is Fanny Dickens, and she only through the fame of her novelist brother, Charles. Of the boys (the original eleven) Charles Lucas later became the third Principal, following after Cipriani Potter. In about 1880, another, C.S. Packer, wrote to the Principal, G.A. Macfarren, from Australia. Macfarren's reply includes the following note on the survivors:

'Of the original eleven (of whom I had not the privilege to be one) yourself, Grattan Cooke (who is now a carrier for a country post office), Holmes, & Pye (who has long deserted music for the wine trade) are all who live to note the progress of those who followed them...'

Packer's history is not one that rebounds to the credit of the Academy. A painful entry in the Committee Minute Book of February 1839 explains his departure, or deportation, to the Antipodes:

'The subject of the trial and condemnation for Forgery of C.S. Packer. An Associate and Honorary Member of the Academy, having been brought before the Committee, - Ordered, that, in pursuance of the 13th Article of the Regulations, the name of C.S. Packer be erased from the Register.'

One could continue with many such quotations from the Academy archives, which reveal the seamier or more humorous side of human nature. But we must end with a quotation from a set of new regulations which a certain Miss Cook brought in when she became the new Governess of the Ladies' department in 1850:

'No.9. No gentleman is permitted to go into the Ladies' Department but by special permission of the Governess, except the Professors and the Medical Attendant...

No.11. Immediately the Professors have finished their instruction for the day the door of the Ladies' Department will be locked and the key kept by the Governess...

No.13. The non-resident Lady-students are not to be allowed to mingle with the resident Lady-students, not to brush their hair in the Red Room, as a room is provided for them down stairs, to which they may go one at a time.'

